

XXXV.—*On the Birds of the Upper Tarim, Kashgaria.*

By M. MENZBIER.

SINCE my return from Western Europe I have been favoured with an inspection of a small but interesting collection of birds formed in the district of the Upper Tarim river, in Kashgaria, presented by Messrs. Majev and Wilkins to the University of Moscow. As I believe some of the species represented therein to be of very great importance, I take this opportunity of bringing a list of the birds before the notice of ornithologists.

The district of the Upper Tarim was previously quite unknown from an ornithological point of view. The Lower Tarim was explored by Col. Prjevalsky. The desert southward from Kashgar and Kashgar-Darja has been visited by the English expeditions, and the fauna of the vast mountain-system of the Tian-shan was studied by the late Mr. Severtzov; but no ornithologist had visited the country of the Taushkan-Darja before the above-mentioned expedition of Messrs. Majev and Wilkins. All the specimens mentioned in our list were obtained by the last-named gentlemen along the route from Kyzil-bulak (southwards from the Muzart gorge, lat. $41^{\circ} 45'$ and long. $80^{\circ} 50'$), to Ulugchat (lat. $39^{\circ} 45'$ and long. $74^{\circ} 20'$), and on the river Uital, during the months of September, October, and November. The average height of this north-western border of the tablelands of Central Asia is from 3000 to 6000 feet above the sea-level. Along the southern slopes of the Koushaal-tan there is no sharp limit between the tableland and the mountain-country. Southwards from the Taushkan-Darja, as far as the middle of the route between Kujuk-tokai and Kashgar, the plateau reaches more than 6000 feet. But we find throughout the whole of the Upper Tarim the uniform character of the tableland of Central Asia, and, as our list shows, we have in it only a part of the Central-Asian ornithological district.

I now proceed to notice the species represented in the collection :—

1. *PODOCES HENDERSONI*.

A beautiful specimen of this remarkable bird was shot at Kyzil-bulak (5335 feet), on the 12th of November.

2. *CYANISTES CYANUS TIAN-SCHANICUS*.

This bird was found at Kyzil-kumbez in the beginning of November.

3. *LEPTOPÆCILE SOPHIÆ MAJOR*, subsp. nov.

L. sophiæ similis, sed major, ala obtusiore, colore cæruleo nec ultramarino prædominante.

Some specimens of this pretty bird were obtained by the expedition on the Taushkan-Darja about Ush-turfan in the beginning of October, and on the river Koushaal at the end of that month. I think that it is the same desert race of *Leptopæcile* that was found by Col. Prjevalsky on the Lower Tarim and was recorded by him as *Leptopæcile sophiæ*.

4. *STURNUS PURPURASCENS*.

This species was obtained in the neighbourhood of Kara-zhodja at the end of September and near Kyzil-kumbez in the beginning of November.

5. *CARPODACUS RHODOCHLAMYS*.

The conspicuous Rose-mantled Grosbeak was found at Ush-turfan on the 19th of October, and along the Uital on the 20th of the same month.

6. *CARPODACUS RUBICILLA*.

A male of this species was shot at Kyzil-kumbez on the 2nd of November.

7. *ERYTHROSPIZA OBSOLETA*.

This pretty bird was found by the expedition near the Taushkan-Darja at Ush-turfan.

8. *BUCANETES MONGOLICUS*.

Some specimens of this bird were obtained by Mr. Majev at Kyzil-bulak and at Egin, along the confines of the desert.

9. *PYRGITA PETRONIA*.

Several specimens of this bird were obtained near Ush-turfan at the end of September and at Jaman-su about the middle of October.

10. PYRGITOPSIS AMMODENDRI.

This species was obtained near the Taushkan-Darja at Ush-turfan as well as more to the west, at Djigda and at Djai-tübe.

11. EMBERIZA CIOIDES.

This bird was obtained on the Beliauty at 11,350 feet, in the beginning of November.

12. ALAUDULA LEUCOPHÆA.

Several specimens of this species were obtained in the neighbourhood of Kara-khodja and near Jaman-su at the end of September and in the beginning of October.

13. OTOCORYS ALBIGULA.

The Eastern Shore-Lark was obtained by the expedition near Kyzil-bulak on the 11th of September and near Kulan-saryk on the 22nd of October.

14. GALERITA MAGNA.

This Crested Lark was found near Kara-khodja and along the river Uital at the end of September.

15. ANTHUS SPINOLETTA.

Some specimens of the Water-Pipit were obtained about Ush-turfan on the 27th of September and near Janji-shar on the 22nd of November.

16. ATRAPHORNIS ARALENSIS.

A male of this species was shot on the 23rd of October near Kulan-saryk.

17. RHOPHILUS DESERTI.

1876. *Rhopophilus pekinensis*, β . var. *major*, Prjev. 'Mongolia, the Tangut Country' (in Russ.), p. 32.

1878. *Rhopophilus deserti*, Prjev. 'Expedition to Lob-nor' (in Russ.), p. 23; Ibis, 1878, p. 375.

R. pekinensi similis, sed major et pallidior.

Dimensions. ♂ : length 200–201 millim., expanse 205–225, tail 98–105, wing 69–72, bill 15–16.5, tarsus 24–25.
♀ : length 190–201 millim., expanse 200–210, tail 93–95, wing 68, bill 14–15, tarsus 22–25.

Description. Legs and feet flesh-coloured; bill brown; lower mandible fleshy, except at the tip; iris dark brown.

Plumage. Above pale brown (the desert colour); under surface of the body white. The top and back of the head, back of the neck, back and scapulars pale slightly greyish brown, each feather with a narrow dark-brown central shaft-stripe; on the back of the neck the shaft-stripes are only slightly pronounced. The rump pale brown, without any central dark streaks on the feathers. A long delicate grey superciliary stripe from the nostrils over the lores, eyes, and ear-coverts. A faint dusky streak through the lores to the eyes and ear-coverts. Cheeks and ear-coverts brownish. A dark-brown moustachial stripe from the gape under the cheeks and ear-coverts. Flanks of the neck greyish, each feather with reddish-brown shaft-stripe. Coverts and quills pale brown, with more darkly coloured primaries, and with a tinge of grey on coverts. Chin, throat, breast, and abdomen white, tinged on the flanks and tibial feathers with rufous buff, each feather on the sides of the breast and of the flanks with a narrow reddish-brown shaft-stripe. Lower wing-coverts, axillaries, and under tail-coverts pale rufous buff or buffy white. Tail brown; two middle tail-feathers brown, more darkly coloured along the shafts, and with numerous narrow close-set obsolete bars only visible in certain lights; the other tail-feathers dark brown, with paler tips and outer webs margined throughout their length with pale brown; the two exterior feathers tipped and broadly margined on the outer webs with whitish or white.

Through the kindness of Mr. Strauch, Director of the Zoological Museum in the Academy of Sciences, and of Mr. Büchner, Ornithological Curator of the same institute, I have received for comparison three specimens of *Rhopophilus* obtained by Col. Prjevalsky during his first journey through Mongolia: two *R. pekinensis*, β . var. *major* (= *R. deserti*), from Zaidam, and a male of *R. pekinensis* from Northern China. After a careful examination of all these specimens, and after a comparison of *R. deserti* with *R. pekinensis* and *R. albo-superciliaris* ('Lahore to Yarkand,' p. 218, pl. xviii.),

I am convinced that *R. deserti* is a species intermediate between the eastern *R. pekinensis* and the south-western *R. albo-superciliaris**.

Specimens of this bird were obtained by Mr. Majev in the bushes along the Taushkan-Darja, at Ush-turfan, and Jaman-su in the middle of October.

18. *ACCENTOR FULVESCENS*.

Some specimens of this comparatively rare bird were obtained on the 20th of October near the Upper Uital.

19. *ACCENTOR ATROGULARIS*.

A male of this bird was obtained on the 20th of October near the Upper Uital.

20. *RUTICILLA ERYTHROGASTRA*.

Numbers of Gldenstdt's Redstart were met with on the Taushkan-Darja near Ush-turfan in the beginning of October.

21. *SAXICOLA SALINA*.

This Chat was obtained on the 22nd of October near Kulan-saryk.

22. *TURDUS MYSTACINUS*.

This species was found near Kashgar-tokai on the 30th of October and near Kyzil-kumbez on the 1st of December.

23. *MERULA MAXIMA*.

The Great Blackbird was obtained in the same localities as *T. mystacinus*.

24. *LANIUS MOLLIS*.

A very old female of this most remarkable bird was obtained by Mr. Wilkins near Ulugchat on the 12th of October.

* [With all due respect for our worthy correspondent's opinion, we must assert that, after careful comparison of his two examples of *R. deserti*, Prijevalsky, with the type specimen of *R. superciliaris* (Hume), in the British Museum, we have no doubt, nor has Mr. Seeborn, who has also examined them, as to their specific identity. If our view prove correct, then Hume's name has priority of several years.—EDD.]

25. *LANIUS HOMEYERI*.

Two examples of this species were obtained by the expedition: a female in intermediate plumage near Ush-turfan on the 16th of October, and a young one near Djigda on the 9th of November.

26. *LANIUS ISABELLINUS*.

The Desert-Shrike was observed by the expedition near Aksu on the 20th of September and near Jaman-su in the beginning of October.

27. *UPUPA EOPS*.

A female of the Hoopoe was obtained near Jangishar on the 22nd of November.

28. *TICHODROMA MURARIA*.

We have an example of the Wall-creeper from Ush-turfan, obtained on the 26th September.

29. *PICUS LEPTORHYNCHUS*.

A female of this species was shot on the 19th of September near Aksu.

30. *CUCULUS CANORUS*.

A specimen of the Cuckoo was obtained on the 24th of September near Kara-khodja.

31. *STREPTOPELIA TORQUATA*.

Mr. Majev has sent us some skins of this pretty bird from Aksu, as well as from the neighbourhood of Kashgar.

32. *PTEROCLES ARENARIUS*.

Two specimens of this Black-bellied Sand-Grouse, a male and a female, were obtained about Kulan-saryk on the 23rd of October.

33. *TOTANUS CALIDRIS*.

The Redshank was found on the Kashgar-Darja on the 27th of November.

34. *ANAS STREPERA*.

The Gadwall was obtained near Kashgar-tokai at the end of October.

35. ANAS PENELOPE.

The Wigeon was obtained near Kashgar-tokai on the 30th of October.

36. QUERQUEDULA CIRCIA.

At the end of October the Garganey was found near Kashgar-tokai.

37. QUERQUEDULA CRECCA.

A single specimen of the Teal was received from the neighbourhood of Kashgar-tokai.

38. FULIGULA NYROCA.

The White-eyed Duck was obtained near Aksu on the 20th September, and at Kashgar-tokai on the 20th October.

39. CLANGULA GLAUCION.

The Golden-eye was found on the Upper Kashgar-Darja in the beginning of December.

40. PODICEPS MINOR.

An example of the Little Grebe was obtained near Kashgar-tokai.

XXXVI.—*Further Notes on the Ornithology of St. Kilda.*

By CHARLES DIXON.

THE following additional information on the ornithology of St. Kilda forms a supplement to my paper on the subject (*Ibis*, 1885, p. 69). Unfortunately, I was not able to visit the grand bird-bazaar myself this season, as I had intended; but the subjoined notes have been furnished to me by my friend Mr. John Mackenzie, Jun., who spent his usual fortnight there between the 1st and 14th of June. This gentleman has also supplied me with a fine series of the St. Kilda Wren and also with the nest and eggs of this new British species. The birds were very late in laying this season, especially the Guillemots, owing probably to the bad weather and the exceptionally backward spring.